

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/670,538

Examiner

Andrew Hwa S. Lee

Applicant(s)

GURUNATHAN ET AL.

Art Unit

2886

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☐ This communication is responsive to 2/15/07.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-7,9-14 and 16-20.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☐ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☒ Other copy of memo from J. Love.

Andrew Hwa S. Lee
Primary Examiner
Art Unit: 2886

DETAILED ACTION

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:
 - a. The claims are allowable over the prior art of record for reasons stated in Applicant's response of 2/15/07.
 - b. The rejection of claims 12-17 under 35 U.S.C. 101 is withdrawn in light of the recent memo from John Love, Deputy Commissioner For Patent Examination Policy (copy enclosed).

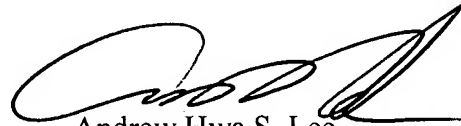
Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Andrew Hwa S. Lee whose telephone number is 571-272-2419. The examiner can normally be reached on Tue-Fr.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tarifur R. Chowdhury can be reached on 571-272-2800. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 2886

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Hwa S. Lee', is positioned above the printed name.

Andrew Hwa S. Lee
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2886



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
P.O. BOX 1450
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 12, 2007
TO: Technology Center Directors
FROM: John J. Love *JJL*
Deputy Commissioner
For Patent Examination Policy

SUBJECT: Clarification of Interim Guidelines For Examination of Patent Applications
for Subject Matter Eligibility

Certain inconsistencies have come to my attention in the application of the Interim Guidelines For Examination of Patent Applications for Subject Matter Eligibility, which are set forth in section 2106 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (8th Ed. Rev. 5, Aug. 2006) (MPEP). The situation arises in the context of whether or not a claim is for a practical application of an abstract idea, law of nature, or natural phenomenon. As stated in the Interim Guidelines, a claim is for a practical application of an abstract idea, law of nature, or natural phenomenon when the claimed invention "transforms" an article or physical object to a different state or thing, or when the claimed invention produces a useful, concrete and tangible result. See MPEP 2106, subsection IV.C.2.

Focus on Result

A practical application in this context can be the result itself, and does not require that steps or additional limitations be added to the claim. As stated in *State Street Bank & Trust Co. v. Signature Financial Group, Inc.*, 149 F.3d 1368, 1373, 47 USPQ2d 1596, 1601 (Fed. Cir. 1998):

Today, we hold that the transformation of data, representing discrete dollar amounts, by a machine through a series of mathematical calculations into a final share price, constitutes a practical application of a mathematical algorithm, formula, or calculation, because it produces "a useful, concrete and tangible result"—a final share price momentarily fixed for recording and reporting purposes and even accepted and relied upon by regulatory authorities and in subsequent trades.

It is the result that should be the focus. If the result has a real world practical application/use, then the test has been satisfied. The claim need not include the uses to which the result is ultimately put, just the result itself. Another example would be an improved method for measuring blood sugar levels in human beings. In this example, the end result is the blood sugar level which is a practical application for diagnostic purposes. Accordingly, reciting the improved method, and the result it achieves—the measurement of the blood sugar level—is all that is necessary for patent-eligibility. The diagnostic steps that occur after the determination of the blood sugar level need not necessarily be present in the claims in order for the claims to be statutory.

Use of Specific Terminology

Another area of inconsistency surrounds the use of the terms such as “determining,” “calculating,” and similar expressions. Some object to these as not creating a tangible result. Such terms may in fact be sufficient to establish a tangible result. *See, e.g., State Street*, 149 F.3d at 1375, 47 USPQ2d at 1602 (holding the calculation of a number having a real world value and to be a “useful, concrete, and tangible result”) and *AT&T Corp. v. Excel Communications, Inc.*, 172 F.3d 1352, 50 USPQ2d 1447 (Fed. Cir. 1999) (holding a method claim including the generation of a message record for an interexchange call to be statutory). The specification should be referred to for a meaning of the terms. *See In re Musgrave*, 431 F.2d 882, 893, 167 USPQ 280, 289 (CCPA 1970) (“[w]e cannot agree with the board that these claims (all the steps of which can be carried out by the disclosed apparatus) are directed to non-statutory processes merely because some or all the steps therein can also be carried out in or with the aid of the human mind or because it may be necessary for one performing the processes to think. . . .”).